

REGULAR WEEKLY SESSION----ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL

December 5, 2005

9:00 a.m.

The Council of the City of Roanoke met in regular session on Monday, December 5, 2005, at 9:00 a.m., in Room 159, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, with Mayor C. Nelson Harris presiding, pursuant to Chapter 2, Administration, Article II, City Council, Section 2-15, Rules of Procedure, Rule 1, Regular Meetings, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, and pursuant to Resolution No. 37109-070505 adopted by the Council on Tuesday, July 5, 2005.

PRESENT: Council Members Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., Sherman P. Lea (arrived late), Brenda L. McDaniel, Brian J. Wishneff (arrived late), M. Rupert Cutler, Alfred T. Dowe, Jr., and Mayor C. Nelson Harris-----7.

ABSENT: None -----0.

The Mayor declared the existence of a quorum.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager; William M. Hackworth, City Attorney; Jesse A. Hall, Director of Finance; and Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

COMMITTEES-CITY COUNCIL: A communication from Mayor C. Nelson Harris requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss vacancies on certain authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council, pursuant to §2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

Council Member Cutler moved that Council concur in the request of the Mayor to convene in Closed Meeting as abovedescribed. The motion was seconded by Council Member McDaniel and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Fitzpatrick, McDaniel, Cutler, Dowe, and Mayor Harris-----5.

NAYS: None -----0.

(Council Members Lea and Wishneff were not present when the vote was recorded.)

CITY COUNCIL: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss acquisition of real property for public purpose, where discussion in open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

Council Member Cutler moved that Council concur in the request of the City Manager to convene in Closed Meeting as abovedescribed. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Fitzpatrick, McDaniel, Cutler, Dowe, and Mayor Harris-----5.

NAYS: None -----0.

(Council Members Lea and Wishneff were not present when the vote was recorded.)

ITEMS LISTED ON THE 2:00 P. M., COUNCIL DOCKET REQUIRING DISCUSSION/CLARIFICATION, AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE 2:00 P. M., AGENDA:

ZONING: Council Member Cutler inquired if it was the intent of Council to vote on the new Zoning Ordinance at the 2:00 p.m., session; whereupon, the Mayor advised that the public hearing was held on Monday, November 21, 2005, however, there may be citizens who wish to speak at the 2:00 p.m. Council meeting prior to Council's vote on the ordinances.

COUNCIL-SCHOOLS: The Mayor reminded Council of the joint Council/Roanoke City School Board Retreat to be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2006, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in Room 159, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, and suggested that any agenda items be submitted to the City Clerk.

The City Manager advised that the School Board's agenda would include the sharing of plans to address various aspects of educational standards and the School Board is prepared to assume responsibility for a majority of the meeting in order to help Council become better grounded in school-related issues.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION BY THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:
NONE.

Council Member Lea entered the meeting.

BRIEFINGS:

CITIZEN SURVEY: The City Manager advised that a comprehensive citizen survey has been conducted by the City of Roanoke for the past five years by the Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research which focused on customer satisfaction levels regarding certain City services. She stated that results of the surveys have helped the City to be more responsive with regard to the delivery of services; and the time schedule for the survey this year was modified in order to aid City departments as they prepare their fiscal year budgets inasmuch as past results were not available until after departmental budgets were adopted and caused approximately a one year delay to implement certain improvements. She further stated that this year's survey was designed to not only ask citizens to rate the quality of City services, but to respond to a number of strategic issues that the City wishes to address, in addition to several open-ended questions. The City Manager introduced Susan Willis-Walton, Co-Director, Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research, to present the briefing.

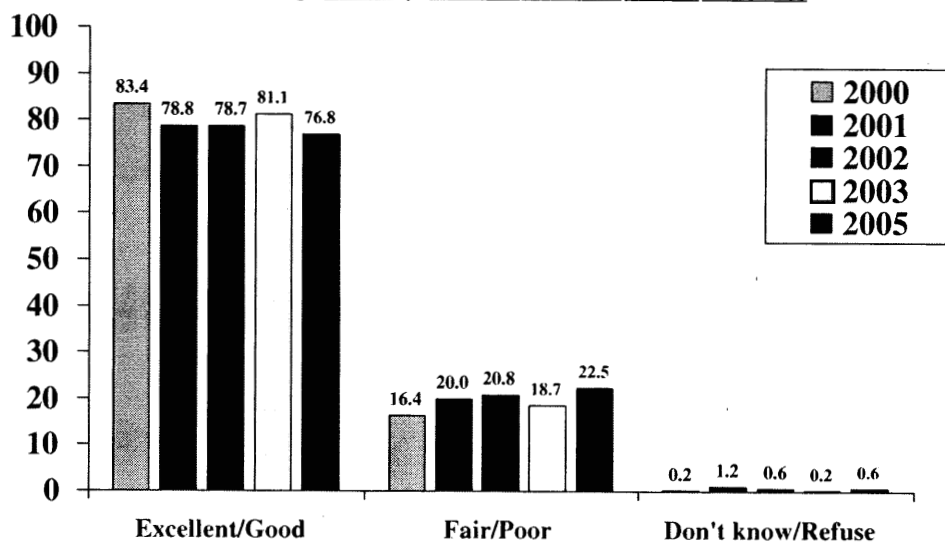
Ms. Willis-Walton called attention to the results of another survey that was published in *The Roanoke Times* which contained similar topical questions, but methodology was different and was conducted over a two-day period with registered voters, versus the survey conducted by Virginia Tech which was a random scientific sampling of citizens. She presented the following survey highlights:

Citizen Ratings of the City of Roanoke As A Place To Live: 2000-2005

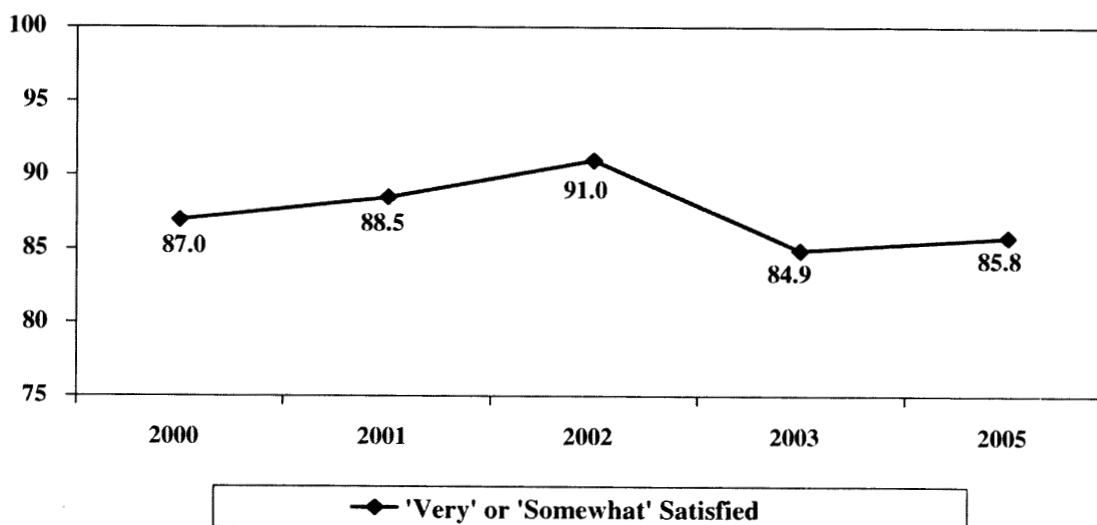
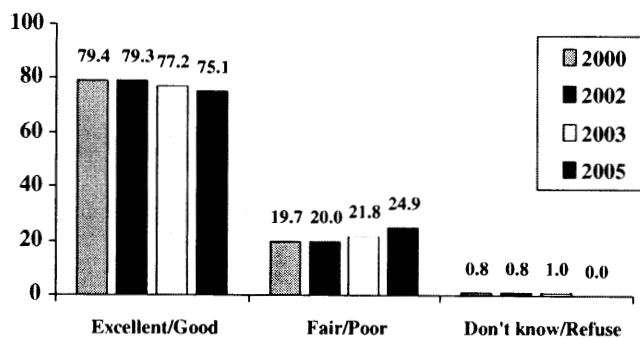
- ☐ Random Sampling Design
- ☐ Survey Instrument Focus: New Items and Methodology
- ☐ Dates of Administration: 5/23/05-8/9/05
- ☐ Survey Pre-test
- ☐ Survey Administration Via Telephone
- ☐ 505 Completed Telephone Interviews
- ☐ Sampling Error: ± 4.4 percent
- ☐ Survey Length: 18.5 Minute Average

	Population	2003 Respondents	2005 Respondents
Gender	53.1% Female; 46.9% Male	63.9% Female; 36.1% Male	63.6% Female; 36.4% Male
Age	39.7% <40 yrs. 60.3% 40+ yrs.	33.9% <40 yrs. 66.1% 40+ yrs.	23.8% <40 yrs. 76.2% 40+ yrs.
Race	26.7% Black 69.4% White 3.9% Other	19.3% Black 79.1% White 1.6% Other	21.1% Black 75.9% White 3.0% Other
Income	65.1% < \$50,000 34.9% \$50,000+	72.8% < \$50,000 27.2% \$50,000+	68.7% < \$50,000 31.3% \$50,000+

Citizen Ratings of the City of Roanoke As A Place To Live: 2000-2005



Citizen Ratings of Quality of Life in the City of Roanoke



'Excellent' or 'Good': 20052003 Ratings Appear in Parentheses

(95.1) Fire Protection Services - 92.2%	(75.5) Cultural Activities/Events in the City - 0.5%
(93.0) Emergency & Rescue Services - 1.7%	(78.4) The City's Recreation Programs - 69.0%
(94.1) 911 Emergency Call Center - 91.5%	(75.4) Clean/Maint. Parks/Rec. Facilities - 68.7%
(92.6) Public Library Services - 90.7%	(70.0) Maint. of City-Owned Buildings - 68.7%
(84.6) Weekly Trash Collection - 85.9%	(69.1) Street Lighting - 68.7%
(75.6) City Beautification Programs - 81.9%	(74.0) Clean/Maint. Community Rec. Cntrs. - 7.2%
(79.1) Police Services - 80.4%	(NA) Maint. of Trees Along Streets/In Parks - 67.2%
(81.8) Emergency/Disaster Mgmt. - 80.1%	(65.3) Removal of Snow/Ice From Streets - 66.9%
(81.9) Mowing/Maint. of City Parks - 79.3%	(72.5) Mowing Rt.Ways/ Medians/ Roadsides - 66.7%
(74.2) Recycling Services - 77.7%	(67.9) Animal Control - 65.3%
(75.6) Pick-up of Large Items/Brush - 76.5%	(69.4) Quality Civic Center Cultural Events - 64.9%
(75.4) Convenience of Bill Payment - 72.5%	(NA) Quality New Sidewalk Construction - 64.8%
(74.9) Bagged Leaf Collection - 71.6%	(69.3) Building Permits Application/Review - 62.1%

Citizen Ratings of City Services as 'Excellent' or 'Good': 2005 Continued2003 Ratings Appear in Parentheses

(66.7) Building Inspections - 61.4%	(50.2) Promoting Env. Awareness - 50.8%
(65.6) Loose Leaf Collection - 60.5%	(56.2) Regulation/Zoning Land Use - 50.1%
(64.3) City Gov. Support Nbrhd Orgs. - 59.9%	(52.4) Efforts to Improve Housing - 50.0%
(59.7) Econ. Dev. Assist. to Business - 58.9%	(NA) Maint. of Existing Sidewalks - 49.3%
(62.0) Quality Civic Center Events - 58.7%	(52.0) Response to Citizen Requests - 48.6%
(NA) Quality Athletic Fields/Facil. - 57.8%	(53.6) Transportation Planning for Traffic - 48.6%
(64.1) Getting Information to Citizens - 56.7%	(50.9) Availability of Civic Center Parking - 45.2%
(63.4) Street Sweeping - 54.2%	(54.3) Property Code Enforcement - 43.8%
(46.0) City Parking Facilities - 54.1%	(48.2) Street Paving, Maintenance/Repair - 40.4%
(63.5) Maint. Storm Drainage Syst. - 52.7%	(42.3) Weed Abatement - 37.6%
Ratings For Services Provided By Autonomous Government Organizations	
(84.4) Water Services - 79.3%	(60.8) Roanoke Public Schools - 62.2%
(82.2) Health Department - 78.0%	

City Services With At Least A Five Position Rank Order Increase Since 2003

- ☐ City Parking Facilities (From 47th to 34th)
- ☐ Removal of Snow and Ice From City Streets (From 28th to 16th)
- ☐ City Beautification Programs (From 15th to 6th)
- ☐ Street Lighting (From 26th to 17th)
- ☐ Economic Development Assistance to Businesses (From 37th to 29th)
- ☐ Recycling Services (From 17th to 9th)
- ☐ City's Efforts to Promote Environmental Awareness (From 45th to 38th)
- ☐ Current Level of Bagged Leaf Collection Service (From 21st to 14th)
- ☐ City Efforts to Improve the Quality of Housing in the City (From 42nd to 35th)
- ☐ Maintenance of City Owned Buildings (From 25th to 20th)

Services With A Percentage Rating Decrease Since 2003
(Citizen Ratings of 'Excellent' and 'Good' Combined)

City Service	2003 Rating	2005 Rating	% Decline
Maintenance of Storm Drainage Systems	63.5%	52.7%	-10.8
Enforcement of Property Maintenance/Nuisance Codes	54.3%	43.8%	-10.5
City's Recreation Programs	78.4%	69.0%	-9.4
Street Sweeping	63.4%	54.2%	-9.2
Street Paving, Maintenance, and Repair	48.2%	40.4%	-7.8
Citizens Getting Information About City Services/Activities	64.1%	56.7%	-7.4
Building Permits Application and Review Process	69.3%	62.1%	-7.2
Cleanliness and Maintenance of Community Rec Centers	74.0%	67.2%	-6.8
Cleanliness/Maintenance of Parks/ Rec Facilities in General	75.4%	68.7%	-6.7
Regulation and Zoning for Land Use	56.2%	50.1%	-6.1
Mowing Right of Ways, Street Medians, and Roadsides	72.5%	66.7%	-5.8
Availability of Parking at the Civic Center	50.9%	45.2%	-5.7
Building Inspections	66.7%	61.4%	-5.3
Current Level of Loose Leaf Collection Service	65.6%	60.5%	-5.1
Cultural Activities and Events in the City	75.5%	70.5%	-5.0
Transportation Planning for Traffic	53.6%	48.6%	-5.0
Weed Abatement	42.3%	37.6%	-4.7
Quality of Civic Center Cultural Events	69.4%	64.9%	-4.5

Citizen Agreement on Roanoke Strategic Issue/Question Survey Items 2000-2005

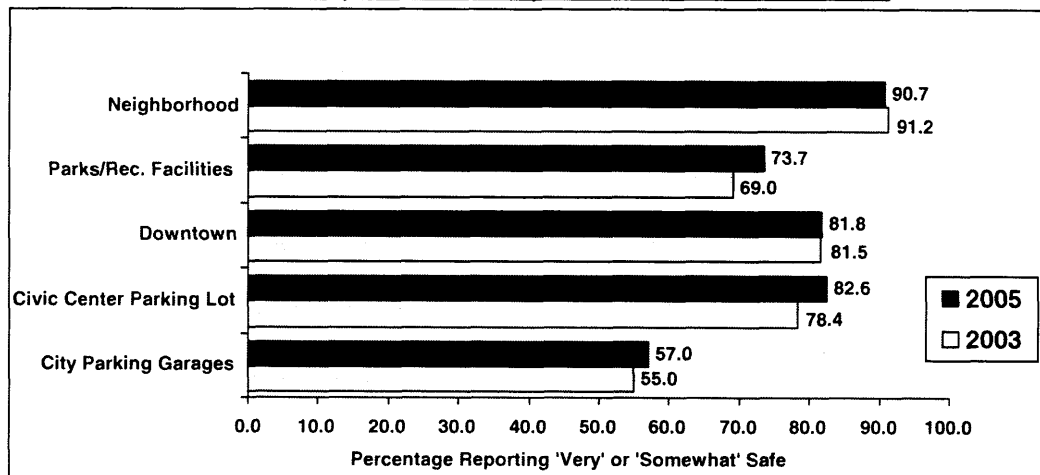
Survey Item	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005
Roanoke's neighborhoods are good places to live	83.2	NA	87.4	NA	85.3
Clean air and water are valued by the Roanoke community	NA	NA	80.0	NA	85.0
Downtown is vibrant/dynamic destination offering mix of restaurants/entertainment/cultural attractions	NA	NA	84.8	NA	82.4
City does good job offering multicultural events and attractions	85.5	NA	79.0	NA	79.6
City government does good job of historical preservation/protection in the City	79.0	NA	78.8	NA	79.2
Neighborhoods provide needed businesses/services/activities	NA	NA	78.0	NA	78.0
Transportation system allows good mix of transportation options	65.0	NA	74.1	NA	77.6
Roanoke's greenway development effort is a valuable asset to the City and its residents	NA	NA	NA	NA	75.2
There is a good mix of housing types and affordability in Roanoke	75.4	NA	77.0	NA	74.9
Roanoke's downtown is (becoming) the region's economic engine and cultural center	NA	NA	73.5	NA	71.9
Roanoke does good job providing health/human services to citizens who need them	71.0	NA	72.5	NA	70.9
Effectiveness of City government in meeting community needs *	79.4	80.4	74.3	68.8	69.3
The services provided by the City of Roanoke are worth the taxes paid by citizens	65.8	75.1	70.3	69.7	67.1
Educational resources and opportunities available to you and your family in Roanoke*	64.9	NA	64.3	NA	67.1

Roanoke does a good job of supporting existing businesses	NA	NA	NA	NA	66.9
City government does a good job of educating citizens about City services	74.3	NA	66.3	NA	65.9
(City) Community does good job promoting Roanoke as (top) tourist destination for outdoor/family vacations	74.3	NA	65.1	NA	63.4
City government does good job developing/redeveloping commercial and industrial areas in Roanoke	75.0	NA	63.7	NA	62.8
Roanoke actively expanding cooperative efforts with local governments in region	58.9	71.1	53.7	64.0	62.6
City government performance is improving in Roanoke	72.9	75.9	63.1	61.5	61.2
Roanoke's air transportation system effectively links region to major national destinations	NA	NA	59.5	NA	61.2
City officials actively involve citizens in business of City government	63.9	NA	65.5	NA	60.2
Roanoke does a good job of attracting new businesses	65.0	NA	NA	NA	54.9
Roanoke does good job focusing on unique needs of youth	56.3	NA	56.3	NA	49.7
How much of the time do you think you can trust the City to do what is right*	NA	NA	49.3	47.9	45.1
City government's efforts to improve the local economy*	46.9	NA	40.5	NA	42.0

City officials do a good job bringing higher paying jobs to City 53.2 NA 44.1 NA 38.8

*Perceptions of Safety in Roanoke: 2003 & 2005

Perceptions of Safety in Roanoke: 2003 & 2005



City Government Customer Service Ratings: 2000-2005

Percentages Combine Responses of 'Strongly Agree' and 'Somewhat Agree'					
Survey Item	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005
City government employees are generally friendly, courteous, and helpful	86.8	87.9	85.4	86.2	88.9
City government employees treat citizens fairly	78.7	79.4	81.6	80.0	81.0
City government office hours are convenient	75.6	77.8	79.0	75.6	77.2
City government office locations are convenient	69.3	75.2	73.5	73.5	72.9
City government employees provide prompt service	74.4	77.2	77.4	73.3	78.0
It is easy to contact the appropriate City government office when you need a particular service or have a question	72.3	70.9	70.1	68.2	66.7
Convenient parking at City government offices is generally available	39.4	43.6	43.1	41.5	45.9
City parking facility staff are generally polite and responsive	NA	NA	79.6	73.3	75.4

Questions and Answers:

Council Member Dowe asked the following questions:

Question: What can the City do to remind or re-educate the citizens that reduced State funding has affected some areas of the City's ability to provide services?

Response: The City Manager stated that City staff attempts to address the issue during the annual budget process by making recommendations to Council with regard to those service activities that need to be modified and by identifying opportunities to re-engineer as opposed to eliminate services; some reduction in activities and services has occurred, but not all were mandated by the State; general citizen attention is best garnered at the time that a particular service is delivered; and it is important to continually remind citizens of the City's revenue sources and the number of services that are provided within those revenue sources.

Question: Considering a survey of this magnitude, is there any indication that the City is trending downward?

Response: Ms. Willis-Walton called attention to the importance of monitoring trends, and advised that five years of data is a good data base from which to determine the direction of services. She stated that the City plans to conduct a survey every other year to monitor various trends to ensure that City services are not spiraling downward.

Council Member McDaniel asked the following question:

Question: With regard to perceptions of safety, is safety broken down with regard to race and gender?

Response: Ms. Willis-Walton advised that data was cross-tabulated by race and gender.

Council Member Cutler asked the following question:

Question: The service with the greatest percentage of decrease was in maintenance of the storm drainage system. Absent Roanoke County's interest at this time in regional storm water and utilities, what is the City's option to address the issue?

Response: The City Manager stated that the City has no other choice but to either enact a storm water management fee, or delay the fee until such time as neighboring jurisdictions are willing to participate, and suggested that the matter be included on a future agenda for regional discussion by the Roanoke Valley's chief elected officials. She stated that because of the magnitude of storm drainage projects and current commitments, both capital and operating, the City will not be able to make any significant progress on storm water management issues over the next 10 to 12 years unless the City of Roanoke enacts a storm water management fee.

Council Member Dowe stated that appreciation is in order to those City employees who give their best to provide a high level of service to Roanoke's citizens.

The City Manager stated that she was pleased with the significant improvements made by City staff since the 2000 survey; it was a bold move on the part of the City to conduct a survey of citizens regarding City services and citizens responded in a friendly, courteous and helpful manner. She expressed appreciation for the manner in which City staff delivered services throughout the period of organizational changes and recession.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick suggested that the City Manager forward a communication to all City employees expressing the Council's appreciation for their individual efforts in delivering services to Roanoke's citizens.

Council Member Cutler inquired about the availability of Federal and/or State grants to address storm water management and water quality; whereupon, the City Manager advised that the inquiry would be called to the attention of the consultant engaged by the City to pursue potential grant opportunities.

The City Manager stated that she reviewed the citizen survey from the standpoint of improvements that need to be made and challenges that need to be addressed and requested that City staff prepare action plans to address specific issues of concern; whereupon, she reviewed the following action plans:

Action Plan for Maintenance of Storm Drainage Systems

- ☐ The City's consultant presented an overview of the storm water utility options and recommendations. City Council indicated a desire to take a regional approach to such a utility and asked the WVWA to consider this issue, but it has not advanced further at this time. Seek guidance on the appropriate next step.
- ☐ Continue to develop budget and CMERP requests that will improve our ability to address storm water maintenance needs.
- ☐ Purchase and deploy recently funded storm drain camera system.
- ☐ Encourage the shortening of the loose leaf collection season to free up maintenance crews to work on storm water maintenance and other critical maintenance projects.

Action Plan for Enforcement of Property Maintenance/Nuisance Codes

- ☐ Continue working with RVTV and the Office of Communications to develop educational series on code enforcement.
- ☐ Continue to cross-train inspectors.
- ☐ Continue to canvass for nuisance codes and Rental Certificate of Compliance program, thus being proactive and not reactive to reduce the number of citizen complaints.
- ☐ Recruiting inspectors for two vacancies.
- ☐ Continue to demolish derelict structures and mow weeds; the Dept of Housing and Neighborhood Services has eliminated an under performing contractor from their weed abatement program.

Action Plan for City's Recreation Programs

- ☐ Increase and amend the current use of program evaluation forms to determine specific reasons why customers are dissatisfied. It should be noted that participant evaluations for classes, trips, events and athletic programs rate over 80%.
- ☐ Continue our recently strengthened partnership with Roanoke City Public Schools to revamp opportunities for all middle school children during the after-school hours.

- ❑ Develop new partnerships with youth and adult service agencies to leverage resources for a diversity of market segments.
- ❑ Continue current plans for increasing the quality of our youth athletic coaches.
- ❑ Continue the new system for communicating youth sports information to the citizens on a regional basis.
- ❑ Expand upon our user groups and constituents by making our residents more aware of our programs and benefits of participation through implementation of the strategic marketing plan. Share our program successes by becoming more visible in the media.
- ❑ Enhance the use of non-participant survey methodologies to improve program delivery and develop new outcome based programs.
- ❑ Continue to implement the Comprehensive Master Plan to develop new recreation facilities.
- ❑ Improve the image of our program locations by enhancing the atmosphere of our facilities as well as the turf conditions of our ball fields.

Action Plan for Street Sweeping

- ❑ The Sweeper Shop continues to suffer vacancies and an inability to attract qualified applicants. Staff will request Human Resources to evaluate this problem.
- ❑ The Division's website has been modified to allow residents to track street sweeping progress and schedules on-line.
- ❑ Evaluate the impact of only sweeping streets with curb and gutter and the impact of sweeping arterial streets less frequently in an effort to sweep all streets more frequently.
- ❑ Procure and deploy recently funded GPS enabled management system that is intended to increase our ability to track street sweeping progress and productivity.
- ❑ Due to heavy leaf drop in the fall, consider elimination of the late fall and early winter residential street sweeping and modify schedules to focus on leaf collection on arterial streets and in storm drain sensitive areas.

Action Plan for Street Paving, Maintenance, and Repair

- ❑ The Right of Way Excavation and Restoration Standard went into effect on 12/01/04 and is providing an enhanced level of inspection and an improved standard of repair for utility cuts.

- The pothole patching truck continues to be utilized in a wider range of weather conditions than previous methods.
- Even though the funds available for paving have increased, the increased cost of asphalt and milling continues to erode the Division's efforts to meet its goal of paving 57 lane miles per year. A multi-year plan to increase funding is in place. However, alternative pavement preservation techniques such as crack sealing and thin asphalt overlays will continue to be used.
- Advocate the collection of system wide inventory and condition information (currently included in the ITC's future projects list) in an effort to apply limited resources in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Action Plan for Citizens Getting Information about City Services/Activities

- The Office of Communications continues to encourage citizens, the media, and businesses to sign up for the my Roanoke service.
- The website is updated continually with new content, information, and successful applications such as Reverse 911 and eChecks.
- Continue to maintain production of the Roanoke Citizen Magazine, PLAY, and the municipal calendar.
- Continue to promote City programs and services through RVTv and Inside Roanoke.
- Will work more closely with City Departments to ensure that citizen communication is consistent, clear, concise, and of the highest quality.
- Continue to promote City programs and events to local media, including increased promotions to smaller publications such as the Roanoke Tribune.

Action Plan for Building Permits Application and Review Process

- The Building Inspections Division continues to use its comment cards in the Development Assistance Center to get first hand feedback from customers using the DAC for plan/permit submission, etc.
- In addition, the Division has recently implemented a combination permit system that will eliminate the need to obtain multiple permits for a construction project. This move along with reduction in permit fees is expected to streamline the application process.

- With deployment of the primary plans examiner to Iraq last year, Building Inspections was required to adjust personnel to accommodate this function. With the plans reviewer back in place now, we have also made changes to allow backup support for this function to avoid delays in plan reviewer turn-around times.

Next Steps

- In January of this year, City staff provided Council with a comprehensive update of the action plans that were implemented as a result of the 2003 survey.
- Staff is currently updating that document with all of the action plans that are being put in place due to this year's results.

Council Member Lea called attention to previous remarks by the Commonwealth's Attorney in connection with attracting sufficient staff to prosecute misdemeanors through the court system and inquired if the City could be of assistance. The City Manager stated that it would be necessary to appropriate additional funds to the Commonwealth Attorney's budget for the purpose of hiring additional attorneys. She called attention to certain Virginia localities that provide locally funded positions in the Commonwealth Attorney's Office and the City Attorney's Office which positions are intended specifically to prosecute misdemeanors, inasmuch as this is not an area that the State currently funds.

Council Member Wishneff suggested that the Legislative Committee consider the issue of funding for additional attorney positions in the Commonwealth Attorney's Office.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick stated that decreased State funding is only one component of the issue, and another challenge is the fact that the judicial system is not as serious about specific issues as police officers. He spoke in support of developing a better overall understanding of what could be requested of State legislators since they may not be in a position to address funding issues. He also suggested that the matter be brought to the attention of the Virginia Municipal League and to the Virginia First Cities Coalition.

Council Member Wishneff expressed concern with regard to citizen rating on economic development, and inquired if an action plan was developed by City staff to address the issue. The City Manager stated that all issues have action plans that are currently under development, and Council will receive a comprehensive report in early January, 2006 on each item. With regard to tourism, she stated that the City is the major funding source for the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the organization has been requested to increase efforts to obtain additional funding from other Roanoke Valley jurisdictions and to provide performance results relative to previous City funding.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick pointed out that the survey was completed by citizens, who may or may not know the dynamics of economic development.

The City Manager called attention to past efforts of the City to solicit input regarding economic development through monthly breakfast meetings with representatives of various businesses, which have resulted in the receipt of positive feedback and suggestions with regard to needed improvements. She stated that the City would continue to use that avenue as a future resource.

Mayor Harris made the observation that if the City planned to use the citizen survey as a way to focus the City's attention on areas that need improvement, economic development clearly surfaced as one of the lowest ranked items in terms of perceived City performance.

Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) Project Update:

HOUSING/AUTHORITY: The City Manager advised that she was recently requested to sign a letter regarding plans of the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) for the Hurt Park community; however, prior to signing the correspondence she requested that the RRHA brief the Council on the proposed plans. She introduced Earl B. Reynolds, Jr., Deputy Director, Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Mr. Reynolds advised that in the fall of 2004, in response to a Board of Commissioners planning retreat, the RRHA Management Team developed an operational plan which attempted to address the development of a number of strategic plans within the community, and more specifically attempted to address maintenance and/or reconfiguration of RRHA owned and operated housing communities, one of which is Hurt Park. He stated that in January 2005, the total plan, including Hurt Park, was presented to the City Manager and in March 2005, RRHA staff began meeting with community residents, Hurt Park residents, representatives of the Roanoke City School system and certain business persons from the Hurt Park area. He added that the mission of the RRHA is to improve the physical environment of the Hurt Park housing development, to reduce the density of public housing and to promote self-sufficiency, while, at the same time, helping to revitalize the entire Hurt Park community; Hurt Park, constructed in 1967, is the only large rental housing complex in the entire Hurt Park/Southwest area of the City; no major renovations have taken place; the complex is heated with gas heat, but does not have air conditioning; buildings are constructed of brick veneer, stucco and wood siding, with 13 buildings on a small site representing 105 rental units. He advised that improvements are needed in the following categories:

Physical improvement issues – Masonry erosion and infrastructure issues exist throughout the development; the restrictive site allows for only 105 rental units and does not allow for storage units for residents which results in outside clutter; another infrastructure issue relates to servicing the original gas boilers used for heating the facilities, which require that a repairman must go underground and take the boiler apart, piece by piece, and some parts are no longer available.

Social Issues – Density of the buildings: 13 buildings on a restricted site containing 105 rental units does not allow for sufficient exterior space for residents to call their own; there are no acceptable outside areas for people to fellowship, or to hold activities for small children; program issues abound and have been discussed by a group of citizens that have been meeting at Hurt Park School for the past year; the Housing Authority has tried to address the issues by bringing in more services, not just to the Hurt Park community which is owned and operated by the Housing Authority, but to the greater Hurt Park area; and certain chronic issues exist with regard to a specific sector of the community: graffiti, bullet holes in doors, and frequent responses to calls by the Roanoke City Police Department.

Mr. Reynolds advised that:

- The study team held meetings and workshops and other types of interaction to discuss how the problems could be fixed.
- The study team consists of Hurt Park residents, neighborhood residents and groups, City and Housing Authority staff, and architects and engineers.
- Villages at Lincoln, formerly known as Lincoln Terrace, is an example of a successful public housing project; Lincoln Terrace looked much like the Hurt Park community, with a number of deteriorated buildings and a lot of vandalism, etc.; as a result of the Hope Six Program, the Lincoln Terrace community was transformed into a different type of housing development and density was reduced by 145 units (300 units previously existed), which essentially recreated the neighborhood.
- As a part of interaction with Hurt Park community residents, the study team conducted weekend tours with numerous people who had not visited the Villages at Lincoln in order to provide a sense of what could be done in the neighborhood.
- In order to accomplish this type of development, the Hurt Park neighborhood must be recreated.

- There is a need to demolish all 105 Hurt Park units and reconfigure the site.
- Construction of 75 new mixed-finance units, on-site, would be more acceptable as a neighborhood.
- Additional property would need to be acquired in the Hurt Park neighborhood in order to construct approximately 25 new scattered site units and duplexes, single-family homes, etc., similar to what was done at the Villages at Lincoln, and would develop and revitalize the entire neighborhood within a two - four square block area.
- The creation of more home ownership opportunities and the targeting of CDBG and HOME funds in the neighborhood would increase promotion of self-sufficiency.
- A preliminary estimate of the project is \$15-\$16 million.
- HUD funds, low-income housing tax credit funds, mixed financing, CDBG and HOME funds, City infrastructure funding, bonds, and mortgage financing are a potential source of funds.

Possible timeframe:

- 2005 - Continue to consult with residents and community groups.
- 2006 - Move forward with the demolition program, relocation of residents currently residing in Hurt Park, demolition, grading and development of new site plan; funding applications, self-sufficiency grant applications, etc. A Ross Grant has been submitted and if approved, would be divided between Hurt Park and Indian Village.
- 2007 - Begin construction of a two-year construction project.

Mr. Reynolds advised that the RRHA, residents and the neighborhood are excited about the Hurt Park project; and the Housing Authority will continue to develop plans containing more specificity with the City administration and submit a request to HUD for funding approval and for demolition of existing buildings.

The City Manager stated that she was previously requested to sign a letter to HUD officials acknowledging that the City administration was aware of the plan of the RRHA to demolish 25-30 units of Hurt Park public housing, and if Council concurs, she would sign correspondence as requested by the Housing Authority. She further stated that the Housing Authority is pursuing various funding sources and will request certain infrastructure funds from the City of Roanoke that are not currently in the Capital Improvement Plan, which could cause a delay in the construction schedule, or it may be necessary for Council

to re-prioritize certain redevelopment and capital improvement activities in order to make funds available. She added that the most recent budget figure is approximately \$1 million for infrastructure needs, which may or may not be available at the time the request is submitted, assuming that the RRHA is successful in securing funds for demolition of current units and for construction of new units.

Council Member Dowe spoke in support of naming a facility to honor Richard Chubb, long time principal at Hurt Park Elementary School and a strong community advocate. He also suggested that Mr. Chubb's input be invited with regard to initial planning for the Hurt Park community.

Council Member Lea stated that the City of Roanoke will not reach its full potential until communities and neighborhoods like Hurt Park are changed. He commended the City on the positive improvements that have been made to date and advised that the improvements reviewed by Mr. Reynolds for the Hurt Park community are a step in the right direction. He encouraged the RRHA to move forward with the Hurt Park project.

Council Member McDaniel requested more information with regard to the relocation plan and how the plan would work during the demolition process. Mr. Reynolds advised that relocation of residents would be addressed similar to the Lincoln Village project through vacant units that would be demolished first; presently, Hurt Park units are at approximately 80% occupancy; the units to be constructed will not be HUD public housing units; and two - three years out, when new units are available, those persons who wish to move back to the housing development would be given first priority; and the process has identified several candidates who would be placed on a self-sufficiency track leading to relocation in the private market place.

Council Member Wishneff inquired if Hope Six funding is available; whereupon, Mr. Reynolds advised that Hope Six funding is available in name only and is woefully funded inasmuch as larger cities like Detroit, Philadelphia, New York City and Los Angeles are given priority.

The City Manager stated that the Hurt Park project is not a Hope Six application, funds are available through HUD for renovation and reconstruction of units through multiple applications, and the City of Portsmouth recently received Hope Six funding for a project.

Council Member Cutler stated that the Hurt Park housing development is at the end of its physical life in terms of the condition of buildings and infrastructure; and a village center, with trees, and bike trails, etc., would make it difficult to identify where the Hurt Park project stops and the neighborhood begins.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick agreed that the Hurt Park housing development is well beyond its useful age. He spoke in support of the concept of a village center, and stressed the importance of a partnership by Council and the Housing Authority to develop the site into more of a village center, while enriching all of Hurt Park as a neighborhood. He suggested that consideration be given to reducing the number of units to less than the number that is projected, and inquired if there is any significance in single-family homeownership that would help to change the ratio of the levels of low-income housing.

Mr. Reynolds replied in the affirmative and advised that the Housing Authority has developed a considerable amount of experience with its single-family homeownership program, which is accomplished through a lease-purchase arrangement, with almost 100 per cent occupancy. He stated that persons are given up to three years to purchase the home, but experience has shown that participants on average actually purchase the homes within 12-16 months.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick requested more specific information from the RRHA with regard to the role of the City in connection with infrastructure improvements which will be critical to the support and success of the project.

Council Member Wishneff requested a definition of the boundaries of the Hurt Park area; whereupon, Mr. Reynolds stated that Hurt Park is composed of about three different neighborhoods, and Housing Authority owned property is the center point for a community development planning activity that would extend approximately two-three square blocks, but would not take in the entire Hurt Park area.

The City Manager stated that there will be a separate planning function and activity with regard to the Patterson Avenue/Thirteenth Street, S. W., corridor, and Council will receive information at a later date concerning the transformation of multiple apartment homes back to the large estate homes that previously existed which will involve certain creative financing.

Council Member Cutler suggested that consideration be given to retaining the Mountain View Recreation Center as a location for meetings, gatherings and recreation center functions.

Mayor Harris expressed appreciation to Mr. Reynolds for the briefing and advised that the information would be helpful to the Members of Council as they engage in dialogue with citizens regarding the Hurt Park neighborhood.

New Parking Ticket Procedure:

TRAFFIC: The City Manager advised that Sgt. Charles Karr, Police Department; Dana Long, Chief of Billings and Collections; and Pat Kinsey, representing Downtown Roanoke, Inc., served as a team to address City parking enforcement initiatives; whereupon, she called upon Sgt. Karr and Ms. Long for a briefing on the City's new parking ticket procedure.

Sgt. Karr demonstrated a handheld device containing the City's database of all persons who have been issued parking tickets, which would eventually be included in a wireless handheld device.

Ms. Long presented the following information:

Background:

- ☐ 25,000 parking tickets are issued annually by the Police Department, Fire Department, Virginia Western Community College Police, and Airport Police.
- ☐ The Police Department employs civilianized parking enforcement personnel.
- ☐ The Office of Billings and Collections manages the database.
- ☐ 'Parking Roundtable' meetings were held with Downtown Roanoke, Inc.

New Technology:

- ☐ In 2001, Council was briefed on new parking enforcement technology and how technology would allow future flexibility.
- ☐ On October 3, 2005, the City implemented a new computerized parking ticket system along with 'handheld' ticket issuance devices, which was the first major upgrade in ticketing technology in over 20 years.
- ☐ Use of new technology now provides the framework for implementing new initiatives and for re-engineering business processes.

Current Ticketing Process:

- ☐ A ticket is issued allowing 15 days for payment.
- ☐ If the ticket is not paid, a Past Due Statement providing for payment within another 15 days is mailed and a \$15.00 late payment penalty is applied.
- ☐ If the ticket remains unpaid, a Law Enforcement Notice is mailed allowing 15 days for payment.
- ☐ If the ticket remains unpaid, a Court Summons is issued.

- ☐ If the ticket is not dismissed or collected through the court system, it is returned to the Department of Billings and Collection for further collections including submittal to the Set-Off Debt Collection program.
- ☐ 20 per cent of all tickets issued require additional collection effort.

Goals:

- ☐ To ensure ample on-street parking for visitors.
- ☐ To make parking a pleasant experience for the casual downtown visitor.
- ☐ To encourage off-street parking by downtown employees.

New Initiatives Requiring Council Action to Adopt:

- ☐ Warning Tickets.
- ☐ Escalation of Fines.
- ☐ Booting.
- ☐ Implementation Period.
- ☐ These programs address three problem areas:
 1. One-time or casual visitor to downtown who receives a ticket;
 2. Habitual offender who pays tickets;
 3. Habitual offender who does not pay tickets.

Reasons for Additional Enforcement Initiatives:

- ☐ Habitual offenders have learned the 'system' - Court process, chalking.
- ☐ Business complaints.
- ☐ Need to free up parking spaces for visitors and businesses.
- ☐ Time and resources to pursue collections on the accounts.
- ☐ Unpaid parking tickets cost the City thousands of dollars in lost or delayed revenues.

Warning Tickets:

- ☐ Warning tickets are proposed to be issued in the downtown area and nearby vicinity for motorists who have never received a prior parking ticket. Note: Warning tickets are only available for use with the handheld ticket issuance devices.
- ☐ The one-time warning ticket will also include a flyer directing motorists to off-street parking facilities.
- ☐ Warning tickets will aid in dispelling the misperception that parking is difficult in the downtown area.
- ☐ Warning tickets will also decrease the amount of tickets issued to visitors and out-of-state motorists.

How The System Works:

- ☐ The 'handheld' contains a database of everyone who has been issued a parking ticket.
- ☐ First time offenders will receive a warning ticket.
- ☐ Warning tickets will only be issued in Timed Zone parking areas. They will not be issued in fire lanes, disabled zones, or no parking zones.
- ☐ A warning ticket will look like a regular ticket, only there is no fine.

Escalating Parking Fines:

- ☐ Using wireless technology, repeat offenders within the same day would receive escalating fines.
- ☐ Parking fines would increase for repeat violations from \$15.00 to \$30.00 to a maximum of \$45.00 for each repeat violation within the same day.
- ☐ It discourages repeat offenders and those who move vehicles during the day or otherwise wipe off chalk marks, or try to 'beat the system'.

Booting:

- ☐ Effective enforcement tool for citizens who ignore tickets.
- ☐ Wheel immobilization devices are placed on vehicles with over five unpaid parking violation tickets.
- ☐ Boots are removed when all fines are paid.
- ☐ Currently, 171 accounts qualify for booting.

Booting Process:

- ☐ Repeat offender account information is electronically loaded into handheld devices.
- ☐ When a vehicle is located with five or more unpaid tickets, a 'boot' is placed on the vehicle.
- ☐ A window sign is attached warning the motorist not to move the vehicle and stating that the City is not responsible for vehicular damage.
- ☐ The window sign provides a telephone number for payment and removal of boot.
- ☐ Vehicles will be allowed 24 hours to pay for the tickets and have the boot removed prior to the vehicle being towed.
- ☐ Numerous cities, localities, universities, and parking management companies use booting devices, including private lots in the City, Arlington, Alexandria, Richmond, major universities, Virginia Tech, Fairfax, Winchester, VCU, and the District of Columbia.
- ☐ Some localities and states use booting for unpaid taxes and for delinquent child support payments.

- ☐ Virginia Beach and Norfolk tow vehicles after three unpaid tickets.

Proposed Implementation Period:

- ☐ It is recommended that violators be allowed to pay fines and avoid the potential for booting during the four weeks prior to the effective date of the booting ordinance.

Information Plan:

- ☐ Citizens will be informed of changes through RVTV, press releases, the City's web-site, Downtown Roanoke, Inc. Advocate, and flyers.

Proposed Timeframe:

- ☐ Report to Council, December 19, 2005.
- ☐ Implement information plan: December 19, 2005 through January 31, 2006.
- ☐ Warning tickets: January 1, 2006.
- ☐ Escalation of fines: February 1, 2006.
- ☐ Booting: February 1, 2006.

Questions by Council Members:

Council Member Dowe asked the following question:

Question: Is there an opportunity in the court system for individuals who may be temporarily handicapped or those who have received a parking ticket for parking in a space other than a space identified for handicapped parking to offer an explanation?

Response: Sgt. Karr stated that individuals who are approved for a handicapped parking permit are granted permission by State Code to park four hours within a timed zone, but not in a fire lane or a no parking zone, and information is printed on the parking ticket regarding the option to pay the ticket or to appear in court.

Council Member Cutler asked the following questions:

Question: Is the ticket envelope also a return envelope, and did the team receive input from area businesses during the study process?

Response: Sgt. Karr stated that envelopes are returnable, the study team met with representatives of several businesses with regard to employee parking issues, and several businesses offer an off-street parking benefit for their employees, although some employees opt not to use off-street parking.

Question: Have you considered including a flyer with all parking tickets?

Response: Ms. Long stated that a flyer would be considered.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick stated that downtown parking has been an issue for many years. He commended the study team for their work, and advised that he did not see anything in the proposed initiatives that could not be addressed by obeying the law.

Council Member Wishneff asked the following questions:

Question: Is the warning on a one time basis for the life of the vehicle?

Response: Ms. Long responded in the affirmative.

Question: Is there better use of loading zones which are empty for most of the day?

Response: Sgt. Karr advised that some loading zones have been changed to "truck only" for delivery purposes, true loading zones do not distinguish who can park in the spaces as long as the person operating the vehicle is legitimately delivering or picking up an item, and parking is discouraged in certain loading zone areas by marking the space as "truck only".

Council Member Lea asked the following questions:

Question: Could the City receive negative publicity as a result of booting?

Response: Sgt. Karr stated that the City would contract with a certain vendor for a specific period of time, and private lot managers using the booting process have reported success with regard to payment issues. Ms. Long advised that booting was proposed, as opposed to towing, due to the additional expense incurred to retrieve the vehicle; vehicles of habitual violators would be booted, and discussions with various judges and court officials revealed that prosecuting towing violations is burdensome to the average person. Sgt. Karr also stated that technology accessing data bases would help to identify stolen vehicles and provide a better management tool.

Question: What does the habitual offender say in court to be excused from paying the parking ticket?

Response: Sgt. Karr stated that the priority for prosecuting parking tickets is low in the court system and comes down to one person's word against another, much of the process takes place behind the scenes, and the City must ask for the presence of an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney during a court hearing since the City cannot ask cross-examination questions. Ms. Long stated that producing digital photographs in the future will help to remove some of the "his word against her word" type issues.

The City Manager advised that the City currently has 171 accounts that are eligible for booting, which have five or more outstanding parking tickets, some of which amount to thousands of dollars.

Street Restoration Standards:

STREETS AND ALLEYS: The City Manager stated that the City previously instituted new standards for excavation and restoration of streets, which include changes that were deemed appropriate following meetings with various persons and business interests. She called upon Jason Thomas, representing the City Engineer's Office, for a briefing.

Mr. Thomas advised that new street excavation standards replaced the old street opening permit process and presented the following overview:

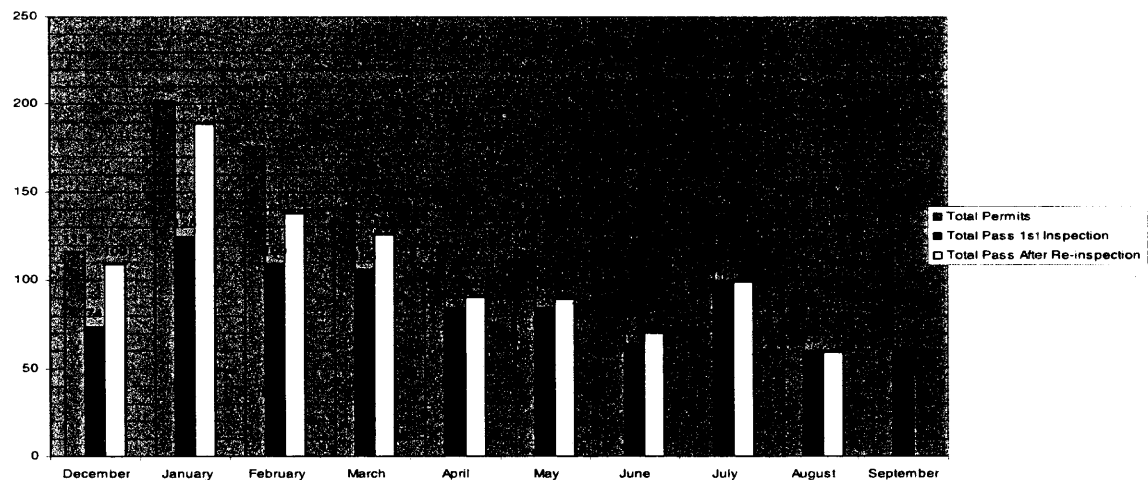
- Provides a new way of doing business
 - Who is applying?
 - Running the Numbers: Pass/Fair Rates
 - Application Review
 - Fast-Track Maintenance Permits
 - Work Location Sheets
 - Work Zone Protection
 - Standardized Backfill Requirements
 - Compaction Testing
 - Coordination of Utility Work Ahead of Paving Program
 - Mill/Overlay
- Bringing innovative repair methods to the valley
 - Backhoe-mounted plate compactor
 - Infrared
 - Standardized asphalt thickness
- Getting it done in 30 days
- Feedback: Changes proposed by Utilities and Contractors
- Changes proposed by the City
- Summary of proposed changes

Slices of the pie from 12/01/04 - 09/30/05:

APCO
Verizon
Contractors for Utilities
Contractors for Developers
Roanoke Gas Company
Western Virginia Water Authority

Total permits 2003 - 841
 Total permits 2004 - 1,500 (Water Authority created 7/01/04)
 Total permits 2005 - 1,550 (projected)

PASS RATES



- TOTAL PERMITS THE FIRST YEAR = 1550 (PROJECTED)
- AVERAGE PERMITS EACH MONTH = 131
- AVERAGE PASS 1ST INSPECTION = 67%

Application Review:

Required for capital projects and large scale repairs

Fast-Track Maintenance Permits:

For large permit volume customers

Pre-approved permits submitted via e-mail

Required for minor or routine repairs and single service connections

Hard copy for inspector

Daily work location sheets:

Puts inspector on the job during the work
Improves communication of the City's expectations
Work Zone Protection:

Good - Adequate signs and flagman
Bad - No signs or flagman

Why standardize backfill and compaction requirements?
Improves long-term durability of repair

Standardized backfill requirements:
VDOT 21A Aggregate
Vibratory trench roller
Proper moisture makes compaction easier
Most important component of repair is good compaction
Avoids future settlement

Standardized testing:
Developing a "Field Spec"

Coordination of utility work ahead of paving program - "Free Ride"
for Utilities

Mill and Overlay:
Why mill and overlay? Because it has got to last!
Surrounding pavement cracks near edges of trench wall
Surface water infiltrates cracks and speeds degradation
Improves ride quality
Improves appearance
Mill/Overlay mitigates these conditions beyond the warranty
period.

Innovative repair methods:
Backhoe-mounted plate compactor introduced by Water
Authority

Innovative repair methods:
Infrared pavement repair introduced by Roanoke Gas
Company

Why getting it done in 30 days is important:
Minimizes hazard to traveling public
Reduces exposure to excess moisture
Reduces chance of repairs being forgotten

Changes proposed by permittees:

Ride tolerance

Current definition of rideability – leveling tolerance to within ¼” at any point across the patch as it relates to the surrounding street surface

Shape of patch

Current standard – repair shall be rectangular and saw-cut in straight, uniform lines that are aligned with the street centerline

Proposed changes

Eliminate this requirement for larger patches; allow non-rectangular shapes such as diagonals

Changes proposed by permittees: Mill and overlay

Current standards if a patch is:

On a street with lane striping

On a street not on the paving candidate list

Larger than 40 square feet

Mill and overlay is required 10 feet in both directions of the lanes that were disturbed.

Proposed changes: Eliminate mill/overlay and offer an extended warranty on the repair or increase the size of the patch to 100 square feet.

Changes proposed by permittees:

Warranty

Current standard:

Each permit carries a one-year warrant. If the work fails, the repair to correct that work is subject to an additional one-year warranty period.

Proposed changes:

Reduce the ‘perpetual’ warranty period to minimize the risk to contractors.

Changes Proposed by City:

Standard patch thickness

Current standard:

All pavements shall be restored to match depths of existing surface, base and aggregate layers.

560

Proposed changes:

Streets with land striping: eight-inch deep repair consisting of two three-inch lifts of asphalt base mix and one two-inch lift of surface mix

Streets without lane striping: four-inch deep repair consisting of one two and one-half inch lift of asphalt base and one, one and one-half inch lift of surface mix

Changes proposed by City:

Temporary pavement repair

Current standard:

None

Adding provision for temporary patching for all cuts in streets with lane striping

Summary of proposed changes:

Standard	Section No.	Existing Standard	Suggested Changes	Author	Staff Recommendations
Patch 'Rideability'	5.1(b)(4)	Defined: a leveling tolerance to within one quarter inch (1/4") at any point across the patch as it relates to the surrounding street surface.	For patches up to 99 sf in area, apply 1/4". For patches larger than 99 sf in area, apply 1/2".	WVWA/LVC	Do not change 'rideability' definition.
Subjective Analysis of 'Rideability'	Does not exist		Add language to address existing pavement conditions that make it very difficult to meet 'rideability' definition. Also add language to allow a more subjective analysis.	WVWA/LBC	

Shape of Patch	Attachment 1, Detail UTR-1, Note 7.	The repair shall be rectangular and saw cut in straight, uniform lines that are aligned with the street centerline.	<p>I. All utility cut patches shall be rectangular within two and one half (2.5) inches per every five (5) linear feet of cut area, in respect to curb/edge of pavement and the patch itself.</p> <p>II. Any utility cut patch that will exceed more than 10 percent of the initial disturbed pavement in order to meet the Standards, shall have the right to complete the patch in the shape that currently exists with the attempt to use uniform lines.</p>	WVWA/LBC	Add: "When an Initial Pavement Repair will be larger than 40 square feet, a non-rectangular shape may be allowed provided the repair is saw cut in straight, uniform lines. Any other deviation on patch shape must be approved by the inspector prior to the" **(CHECK HANDOUT)
Mill/Overlay	5.1©(1)	If a cut is in a street with lane striping, not on the Paving Candidate List, and larger than 40 sf, mill/overlay required for entire lane width and 10 ft in both directions.	Mill/overlay should not automatically be required if a good ride quality can be achieved with the initial pavement repair. Offer an extended warranty or change 40 sf to 100 sf.	WVWA	Change the maximum patch size before milling is required from 40 sf to 100 sf.
Patch Thickness	5.1(b)(3), Attach. 1	All pavements shall be restored to match depths of existing surface, base, and aggregate layers.	Standardize asphalt thickness based on striped vs. un-striped street. Streets with lane striping: 8" deep repair (2-3" lifts of asphalt base and one 2" lift of surface mix.	City Eng.	Accept

Temporary Pavement Repair	5.1(b)(3)	When it is necessary to use cold patch in an opening due to the unavailability of hot mix material, the cold patch will be applied on one lift, approximately 2 inches thick.	Add a requirement that a temporary pavement repair must be applied to all excavations into a striped street before the area is opened to traffic.	LBC	Do not change. Monitor repairs and collect more data on warranty failures.
Warranty	6.2.	One-year warranty. If work fails, the repair to correct that work is subject to an additional one-year warranty period.	If work fails, the repair to correct that work is subject to an additional and final three-month warranty period.	LBC	Do not change. Monitor repairs and collect more data on warranty failures.
Automatic Permitting Process for New Development	Does not exist		Create an automatic permitting process that allows a developer or contractor to get a permit issued for work approved under a Comprehensive or Basic Plan	SC Rossi	Develop a Fast-Track Development Permit process, similar to Fast-Track Maintenance Permits.

Michael McEvoy, Executive Director for Waste Water Services, Western Virginia Water Authority, advised that the Water Authority appreciates the efforts of the City to revise street excavation and restoration standards, which could save approximately \$700,000.00 per year; however, it is necessary to address the warranty issue, which presents a problem for contractors and translates to a cost for the Water Authority.

At 11:30 a. m., the Mayor declared the Council meeting in recess for a meeting of the Legislative Committee.

At 11:40 a. m., the meeting reconvened in Room 159, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, with all Members of the Council in attendance, Mayor Harris presiding.

Zoning Ordinance revision:

ZONING: The Mayor stated that during the past two weeks, City staff responded to various comments that were made at the November 21, 2005, public hearing on the proposed new zoning ordinance, which comments were reviewed by the Members of Council, and a second administrative response was prepared. He inquired if there were other issues that Council Members would like for City staff to address prior to the 2:00 p.m., Council session.

Council Member Wishneff inquired if there had been appropriate follow up by City staff with those persons who spoke at the November 21st public hearing; whereupon, the City Manager stated that after finalizing the report, copies were made available to all persons who spoke at the public hearing, in addition, the information was made available on the City's website and changes were set forth in a communication addressed to the Council under date of December 5, 2005. She further stated that the new zoning ordinance was a tremendous undertaking for the Council, the City Planning Commission and the Steering Committee, and if the City administration finds a problem with a specific property in the future, the matter could be addressed at that time; from a staff perspective, there have been numerous opportunities for input and reaction; and staff would like to be advised of any additional changes that Council Members propose prior to the 2:00 p.m. Council meeting, to allow sufficient time to prepare the required changes to the Zoning Ordinance/Zoning Map.

Mayor Harris stated that citizens would be heard at the Council's 2:00 p.m. session and the Council would have an opportunity to request amendments, if necessary, prior to voting on the ordinances.

Council Member Wishneff stated that he was concerned with regard to issues that were referenced by the Roanoke Valley Home Builders Association and the Williamson Road Action Forum, and both organizations should have an opportunity to review any changes proposed by City staff and respond to the City accordingly prior to the Council's vote on the ordinances.

Council Member Lea requested further clarification as to whether or not information regarding proposed revisions to the Zoning Map was provided to those persons who addressed the Council at the November 21st public hearing on November 21; whereupon, the City Manager advised that each individual who spoke at the public hearing was provided with a personal notice by letter of the contents of the Council report which detailed all changes recommended by City staff since the November 21 public hearing; and approximately 98 per cent of those persons who spoke at the public hearing had their needs addressed in a satisfactory manner without compromising the balance of the document.

There was discussion as to when correspondence with regard to proposed revisions to the ordinances was sent out; whereupon, the City Manager advised that Council's correspondence was included with the Wednesday, November 30, 2005 agenda packet, information was posted on the City's website on the following Thursday and was also mailed to all affected persons on that date, and any person who requested a copy of the response was provided with a copy.

At 11:55 a.m., the Mayor declared the Council meeting in recess for a joint session of Council and the Roanoke City School Board, with the City's representatives to the Virginia General Assembly.

At 12:00 p.m., on Monday, December 5, 2005, the Council meeting reconvened in Room 159, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., the City of Roanoke, for a joint meeting of Council and the Roanoke City School Board, with the City's representatives to the General Assembly, with Mayor Harris and Chair Stockburger presiding.

PRESENT: Council Members Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., Sherman P. Lea, Brenda L. McDaniel, Brian J. Wishneff, M. Rupert Cutler, Alfred T. Dowe, Jr., and Mayor C. Nelson Harris-----7.

ABSENT: None-----0.

The Mayor declared the existence of a quorum.

SCHOOL TRUSTEES PRESENT: Jason E. Bingham, David B. Carson, William H. Lindsey, Alvin L. Nash, Courtney A. Penn, David B. Trinkle, and Kathy G. Stockburger, Chair-----7.

ABSENT: None-----0.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Representing the City of Roanoke: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager; William M. Hackworth, City Attorney; Jesse A. Hall, Director of Finance; and Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

Representing Roanoke City Public Schools: Marvin T. Thompson, Superintendent; Bernard Godek, Associate Superintendent for Management; Cindy H. Lee, Clerk to the Roanoke City School Board; and Timothy R. Spencer, Assistant City Attorney and Legal Counsel.

OTHERS PRESENT: Senator John S. Edwards and his legislative aid Allison Baird, Delegate Onzlee Ware and his legislative aide Frederick W. Hutchins, Jr., and Delegate William Fralin and his legislative aide B. J. Robertson.

COUNCIL-SCHOOLS-LEGISLATION: Chair Stockburger expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet with Council and the City's representatives to the Virginia General Assembly. She stated that not only is the School Board charged with the responsibility of securing funds to operate and to educate children in Roanoke's schools, but with spending funds as efficiently and effectively as possible; however, the School system cannot provide the high quality of education necessary without governmental support. She called attention to a comprehensive audit that is currently underway to align what is being taught in the classroom with other aspects of education and the benchmark report will account for the amount of time spent in the classroom.

Chair Stockburger introduced William H. Lindsey, a School Board representative to the Legislative Committee, to present the following school related items contained in the 2006 Legislative Program:

Mr. Lindsey advised that:

State Funding Current Biennium

- ☐ State Biennium Funding Increase - \$1.5 Billion
- ☐ Roanoke City Schools' State Funding Increase - \$12.0 Million

In connection with State revenue increase, it was advised that a three percent increase is being anticipated, which is consistent with past years.

FY2006 Funding Outcomes

- ☐ Teacher Salary Raise of 3.0%
It was noted that the three per cent increase represents an across the board, which includes classified employees and administrators who primarily participate at the same level as teachers; teacher salaries are competitive with the region and are in line with the State average, but are lower than northern Virginia; the City's average annual starting salary is \$33,000.00-34,000.00, and in view of the nation's economy and market, the City is quite competitive.

Delegate Fralin inquired if the three per cent is an average number per teacher, do senior teachers receive a larger percentage increase, and do junior teachers receive less than average; whereupon, Superintendent Thompson advised that a step formula is in effect for every teacher and employee based on the number of years of employment with the school system and the amount of experience, and the increase is relative to the step category of the individual employee.

- Addition of Three Guidance Counselors and Two School Nurses. It was noted that the additional positions will enable two guidance counselors to be on staff at each middle school; a school nurse is not placed in every school, but shared among elementary schools; adult programs are provided the two high schools; and a full time nurse serves at each middle school.

There was discussion with regard to legislation requiring standards for guidance counselor/student ratios, in which it was stated that more counselors per student would be preferred in view of an increase in responsibilities of guidance counselors who deal with more than curriculum guidance.

The Chair advised that the change in demographics within the City determines what School personnel are required to do, and while numbers may not be different from surrounding jurisdictions, the intensity of engagement is much greater.

- Addition of Eight Technology Positions
- Increase in Health/Dental/Virginia Retirement Rates - \$975,000.00
- Increase of \$900,000.00 in Debt Service

It was pointed out that the Standards of Quality require the State to pay 44 per cent of the cost of all new construction of schools; and lottery monies have assisted inasmuch as funds may be carried over from year to year and are not required to be returned to the State.

- Projected shortfall of \$124,000.00 to cover increased fuel costs.
- Projected shortfall of \$173,000.00 to cover increased food costs. It was noted that this is also fuel related because of increased food delivery costs.
- Projected shortfall of \$125,000.00 to cover increased maintenance costs.

2005-06 Superintendents' Initiatives

- ☐ Leadership Academy - \$85,000.00
- ☐ External Academic Audit - \$157,000.00
- ☐ Information Technology - \$30,000.00
- ☐ Staff Development - \$200,000.00
- ☐ SOL Incentives - \$25,000.00
- ☐ Facilities Maintenance - \$100,000.00
- ☐ Equipment Replacement - \$45,000.00

Superintendent Thompson explained that the External Academic Audit is a full system audit that requires every department in the School system to be evaluated based on national and state standards for operation; and within the next ten days, a draft report with findings and recommendations will be received. He further advised that the group that was selected to perform the audit was chosen because not only do they conduct a comprehensive audit, but they solicit input with regard to how the school system can be more effective.

With regard to SOL incentives, Superintendent Thompson explained that when a new superintendent is hired, changes occur within the organization, and when he evaluated Roanoke's school system, several things were needed within the schools to assist students academically. Therefore, he stated that he recommended to the School Board that funds be allocated to each elementary, middle, and high school to be used at the discretion of the principal to support teachers and to meet the needs of students.

In connection with the Leadership Academy, Superintendent Thompson advised that education has changed dramatically requiring a different skill set and it is incumbent upon the Superintendent to build leadership from within the school system, so that if changes occur, it will not be necessary to look outside the Roanoke City school system for quality personnel.

Legislative Priorities

- ☐ Maintain and Enhance State Funding for the Standards of Quality
- ☐ Continue Joint Partnership with the State for Improving Low Performing Schools.
- ☐ Maintain Fiscal Integrity of State Literary Loan Fund to Finance School Construction Projects.

Mr. Lindsey called attention to the importance of the State providing its share of funding for the Standards of Quality, and for a re-benchmarking of the Standards of Quality. He advised that the School Board requests the State to maintain funding at a level in which funds could be acquired early, if necessary.

Priority 1 – SOQ Funding

- ☐ Full Funding of SOQ Positions
- ☐ No Sales Tax Offset of SOQ Costs
- ☐ Maintenance of Pooled VRS Rate
- ☐ Elimination of Federal Deduction from SOQ Computation
- ☐ Adjusted funding for Districts with high poverty indexes
- ☐ Funding for School Safety Needs

Mr. Lindsey advised that numerous school safety needs were addressed during fiscal year 2004-05, and in view of recent reports which indicate that incidents are down from prior years, success is being achieved with implementation of new procedures to decrease disciplinary incidents, such as cameras in the schools, diversionary programs, and guidance counselors.

Priority 2 – Joint Assistance to Low Performing Schools

- ☐ State Program of Joint Grants and Academic Review Teams Continued
- ☐ No State Takeover of Low Performing Schools

Priority 3 – State Literary Loan Fund

- ☐ Fiscal Integrity of Fund Maintained in Order to Make Timely Loans
- ☐ Loan Term Objective for State to Finance 55% of School Construction Needs

Legislative Outcomes

- ☐ Improve Student Performance on Standards of Learning Tests.
- ☐ Ensure All Schools Meet State Accreditation Standards and NCLB Requirements (AYP)
- ☐ Reduce Dropout Rate and Increase Graduation Rate
- ☐ Raise Competitiveness of Employee Compensation
- ☐ Modernize or Replace School Facilities

Senator Edwards inquired as to how the City intends to address dropout and graduation rate issues; whereupon, Mr. Godek advised that the school system must believe that every child can learn; and graduation begins with a linear track between middle school curriculum and high school curriculum, as well as monitoring a student's progress, and informing the parent of the expectations placed on the student. He stated that the dropout rate is about

prevention which begins at the elementary school level; those children who are passed on to middle school who are two or three grade levels behind are destined to be dropouts; and with a large number of students reading at the second grade level, in conjunction with the current graduation and dropout rates, it was determined that the school system's curriculum needed to be adjusted.

Senator Edwards inquired about alternative programs for students who have fallen behind and do not wish to remain in school, such as the former Blue Ridge Technical Academy, and whether other alternative programs that teach a skill are available for students who are not college bound.

It was advised that City representatives are currently meeting with area businesses and a group of educators will attend the National Career Technical Education Forum to evaluate current trends in industries. It was further advised that an assessment is prepared to identify interests and ability levels at the middle school age and guidance counselors meet with students and use the assessment as a tool to accurately counsel students on future goals; and for today's student, a diploma does not have to look like the advanced or the standard diploma because there are a number of other ways to educate young people.

Senator Edwards stressed the importance of the school system providing ways for young people who are not college bound to pursue other forms of vocational training, and to provide those students with a sense of pride and the skills to acquire meaningful employment.

Mr. Lindsey advised that the Blue Ridge Technical Academy has been absorbed into the career and technical education curriculum; and the expanded curriculum is currently being taught at William Fleming and Patrick Henry High Schools. The Chair referred to a report that was previously submitted to the School Board advising that the cost for 90 students to attend Blue Ridge Technical Academy was approximately \$800,000.00.

Senator Edwards emphasized the fact that more funds are spent to address the needs of special education students and students with various problems because if those students drop out of school with no skills, more funds will be spent in other areas, such as police, jail, and social services, etc. He stressed that not every child will fit into the mold of a certain cost per child for education.

Senator Edwards expressed appreciation for the tour of the new Patrick Henry High School, and stated that it is rewarding to see tangible evidence of the use of taxpayers' money. He advised that a bill was passed during the last Session of the General Assembly endorsing experiential learning for second career teachers, and the Department of Education established certain regulations pertaining to experiential learning.

Senator Edwards discussed certain education issues that he plans to support during the upcoming Session of the Virginia General Assembly, such as the leveling out of VRS payments which may not be possible without some kind of constitutional issue, introduction of legislation to standardize graduation rates across the Commonwealth of Virginia in order to make a comparison with other jurisdictions, and a bill that will help train School Resource Officers to stress the importance of Internet safety. He announced that a No Child Left Behind special education meeting will be held in the near future, and stated that he shares many of the City's concerns with regard to the program and looks forward to learning more about potential options. He added that he plans to introduce a budget amendment to increase alternative school funding due to the importance of placing young people who do not thrive in the traditional school environment and who may be hindering the learning of others in a suitable setting. He requested support of and/or suggestions with regard to the abovereferenced issues.

Thomas A. Dick, the City's Legislative Liaison, reviewed the City of Roanoke's 2006 Legislative Program.

Public Safety

Section 15.2-906, Code of Virginia, authorizes localities to remove, repair or secure any building, wall or other structure which might endanger the public health or safety. However, this section prohibits localities from taking such action for at least 30 days following the "later of the return of the receipt [for mailed notice] or newspaper publication." The City requests an amendment to reduce the 30 days to seven days in those instances where a locality simply seeks to "secure" (board up, for example) a building, as opposed to removing or repairing it.

Delegate Fralin called attention to the language, "secure any building", and inquired if the City has a preference as to whether the building is occupied or vacant, because unoccupied buildings have a more urgent need than occupied buildings. Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick stated that it depends on whether or not an absentee property owner has occupants residing in the dwelling under conditions that are detrimental to their health and safety; this is one of the more difficult issues that Council has dealt with, and asked if the request could be addressed under the City's population as opposed to a state wide initiative.

Historic Districts

The City requests legislation to amend Section 36-99, Code of Virginia, to authorize localities to require building permits for installation of replacement siding, roofing and windows in buildings within historic districts. This will benefit the City's historic neighborhoods

The City Attorney explained that the City has approximately 1,400 properties in the designated Historic District, and architectural review and approval is required for certain non-structural repairs such as new roofs, windows and sidings, etc., and State law requires that no building permit be issued if repairs are not structural in nature. He stated that no mechanism is currently in place to assist property owners when repairs are not consistent with code requirements and in those instances when a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Architectural Review Board was not obtained prior to commencing the repairs. He further stated that because repairs can cost the property owner substantial sums of money, the City is trying to find a way to help the property owner by requiring building permits in the Historic Districts prior to commencing repairs.

Agents for Rental Units

Section 55-218.1, Code of Virginia, requires property owners who own four or more units in the Commonwealth of Virginia, but do not reside in the Commonwealth, to maintain an agent who is a resident of the State. The General Assembly is requested to amend the Code section to require that the property owner's leasing agent or representative operate in the same locality as the property, or in an adjacent locality.

Senator Edwards inquired if proof of notice is the issue, and suggested that the City require appointment of an in State agent who would be required to register with the State Corporation Commission, and the agent would not be required to live in the locality or adjacent locality. The City Attorney agreed that the suggestion would be an improvement.

Domestic Violence

The City requests that the Virginia Crime Commission consider recommending proposals to address domestic violence that would include: amending §9.1-116.1, Code of Virginia, which creates the Virginia Domestic Violence Victim Fund, in order to authorize use of such fund to provide immediate assistance to victims of domestic violence; legislation to permit the victimless prosecution of domestic violence cases when a victim is uncooperative and sufficient evidence and/or supporting witnesses are otherwise available; enact sentencing guidelines that require a set fine and incarceration for domestic violence offenses, similar to DUI statutes; and legislation to prohibit the immediate release of domestic offenders in order to prevent them from being able to immediately confront their victims, as often is the case.

The City Attorney advised that the State Crime Commission has been requested to study some of the issues, and additional information is forthcoming with regard to the nature of various issues that have been raised by law enforcement officials locally.

Constitutional Amendment for Partial Tax Exemption

Approval of an amendment to Article X, Section 6(a)(7)(h), Constitution of Virginia, to provide authority for passage of legislation authorizing localities to provide for a partial exemption from local real property taxation of new construction in conservation, redevelopment or rehabilitation areas. The Constitution already permits partial tax exemption for substantial renovation, rehabilitation and replacement of existing structures. The legislation passed in the 2005 General Assembly and must be approved again in 2006.

Trash Containers

The City requests that legislation be enacted enabling localities to assess civil penalties against residents who fail to remove their trash containers from the street within the time period required. (Currently in the City by 7:00 a.m. of the day following collection.)

Mr. Dick reviewed the following other legislative priorities:

- Energy Efficiency. The City requests a study to develop enabling legislation to authorize a real estate tax break for buildings constructed using “green building” or sustainable” designs consistent with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.
- Telecommunication Taxes. Some changes to the Commonwealth’s telecommunications tax structure are necessary to address new and changing technologies. However, any proposed revisions must keep such taxes revenue neutral for the City.
- Eminent Domain. The City opposes legislation that would further limit local eminent domain authority and notes that in the past ten years, the City has acquired property after filing eminent domain processing only five times. Two were for sewer easements, two for pedestrian walkway, and one was for a power line extension.
- Cable Television Franchise. The City supports competition in the provision of cable television service. However, the City prefers to negotiate the franchise agreements for all providers that best meet the needs of the community instead of a standardized statewide franchise.

Additionally, the City of Roanoke supports Virginia First Cities Coalition efforts to:

- o Preserve local taxing authority
- o Fully fund the Standards of Quality
- o Add funds to programs that improve the educational attainment of at-risk students
- o Substantially increase State funds for public transportation
- o Increase enterprise zone funding
- o Support Housing Commission legislation that benefits cities

Council Member Lea advised that he was appointed to the Urban Transportation Commission by Governor Warner, and the Governor's charge to the Commission in Executive Directive No. 11 is as follows:

- ☐ What are the current obstacles to better urban transportation?
- ☐ What long-term fiscal and energy savings can be generated through the adoption of improved urban transportation initiatives?
- ☐ What can be learned from evaluation of recent regional land use studies to promote better development and redevelopment?
- ☐ What framework should the legislature establish in order to improve the quality of urban transportation?
- ☐ What are the legislative, regulatory, and incentives-based reforms necessary to improve urban transportation?

He further advised that the Transportation Commission has met on four occasions, and referred to a letter addressed to the Governor requesting a one time capital fund. He stated that the City of Roanoke has proposed a total of \$4 million for capital projects, with a majority of funds to be used for a 125 space expansion of the Greater Roanoke Transit Company's parking facility at the Campbell Court Transportation Center. He called upon Kenneth King, Jr., Director, Streets and Traffic, for additional comments.

Mr. King advised that the Transportation Committee expressed concern with regard to the language in the document, however, funding is the primary issue. He further advised that:

- ☐ the State should allow localities to assess a regional gas tax;
- ☐ the State-wide gas tax should be increased as a source of additional funding;
- ☐ a gas tax is not a sustainable long term funding source of transportation, but is the best current source and could serve as a stop gap measure to meet current demands; and

- the formula for street maintenance payments for urban areas does not take into account age and infrastructure, or complexity of the system.

He further stated that the City of Roanoke currently maintains over 100 bridges which is expensive; and the Transportation Commission will most likely recommend that the issue of imposing tolls on Interstate I-81 be studied. He noted that the City of Roanoke carries a large portion of the share of matching funds with Federal funds, and the Transportation Commission is recommending that the State share in any increases.

Mr. King pointed out that Congressman Goodlatte was instrumental in obtaining Federal funds to assist the City with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge project which eliminated numerous environmental review procedures in order to expedite the project. He added that the Transportation Commission will encourage the State to provide greater flexibility to the City to allow Federal funds to be used for large projects, and to use State funds for smaller improvements.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick advised that Council Member Wishneff previously introduced language with regard to amending the City Charter to authorize the holding of advisory referenda in the City of Roanoke; and at a special meeting of the Legislative Committee which was held earlier in the day Council approved the following:

The council shall have authority to order, by resolution directed to the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, the submission to the registered voters of the city for an advisory referendum on any proposed question or group of questions relating to the affairs of the city. Upon receipt of such resolution, the Court shall order an election to be held at the next general election. The election shall be conducted and the result thereof ascertained and determined in the manner provided by general law of the Commonwealth for the conduct of referendum elections, and by the regular election officials of the city. Following certification of the election results by the Electoral Board to the Circuit Court, the Court shall enter an order proclaiming the results of the election, and shall transmit a duly certified copy of the order to the Council.

If a petition requesting the submission of a question or group of questions relating to the affairs of the city, set forth in such petition, signed by registered voters equal in number to twenty-five percent or 5,000, whichever number is the greater, of the largest number of votes cast in any general or primary election held in the city during the five years immediately preceding, each signature to which has been witnessed by a person whose affidavit to that effect is attached to the petition, and the address of each signator having

been given along with the signature, is filed with the clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, the clerk shall forthwith certify that fact to the Court after the city's registrar has verified that the requisite number of persons registered to vote in the city have signed the petition. Upon certification the Court shall order an election to be held at the next general election after the receipt of such resolution, in which such proposed question or questions shall be submitted as a resolution to the registered voters of the city for their approval or disapproval. Such election shall be conducted and the result thereof ascertained and determined in the manner provided by general law of the Commonwealth for the conduct of referendum elections, and by the regular election officials of the city. If a majority of those voting approve the proposed referendum, then the clerk of the Court shall communicate such result to the council for its consideration as an advisory resolution.

The City Attorney explained the process for a Charter amendment; i.e.: Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 19, 2005, following legal advertisement in a local newspaper, and Monday, December 26, 2005, is the deadline for requesting draft legislation.

Council Member Wishneff stated that Senator Edwards submitted the same legislation last year, but the legislation died due to lack of support by the Council.

Delegate Ware pointed out that advisory referenda is not taken lightly at the General Assembly. He expressed concern that the request came at the last minute and there has not been sufficient time for study and consideration. He questioned the basis on which the request was made for consideration at the 2006 Session.

Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick clarified that the Legislative Committee had completed the City's 2006 Legislative Program prior to the time that Council Member Wishneff introduced the City Charter amendment regarding advisory referenda.

Council Member Wishneff advised that the proposed Charter amendment request was not tied to the Victory Stadium issue which has already been addressed, and Council Member Lea added that a recent Mason Dixon poll conducted by *The Roanoke Times* showed that 84 per cent of Roanoke's citizens favor advisory referenda.

Delegate Fralin stated that there will most likely be questions regarding the proposed Charter amendment, i.e.: why it is being requested, who will pay for the referendum should it pass the General Assembly, and the bill may not be effective until July 1, following the last general election. He also inquired if the referendum would be citizen or Council initiated.

Council Member Wishneff explained that the intent of his proposal is that the referendum would be held only at a scheduled election, therefore, no additional costs would be incurred by the City.

Delegate Fralin noted that there is no reference as to when a petition must be presented; whereupon, the City Attorney advised that the issue of the petition is addressed by the State statute that governs referenda. Mayor Harris stated that if bills are introduced that contain lower thresholds than the 25 per cent or 5,000 signatures of registered voters, he would personally forward a letter asking members of the General Assembly to not vote in favor of the referendum because such was not the intent of Council.

Senator Edwards advised that 2004 was the first time in decades that the General Assembly fully funded the Standards of Quality, and legislators are re-benchmarking which means more money because the numbers must be readjusted every two years; the legislators will continue to lobby for full funding of the Standards of Quality, raises for teachers, etc.; and the City's representatives to the General Assembly are committed to ensuring that education is the number one priority. He called attention to the positive impact of the Headstart and Preschool At Risk Programs, and he will continue to work toward implementation of preschool programs, and to work with private providers to establish a public program in which every child, four years old, can attend a preschool program at the option of the parents. He stressed the importance of school systems, statewide, continuing to work for better and more nutritional lunch standards throughout the state, and noted that the Department of Education and the Department of Health are currently reviewing the standards which are anticipated to take effect sometime this year.

Senator Edwards called attention to transportation issues; i.e.: road upgrades in southwest Virginia, clogged roads in northern Virginia and Hampton Roads which will continue to hinder economic progress unless improvements to the transportation system in other areas of the State are completed; problems are enormous and a special session of the General Assembly may be necessary to discuss the issue; and a tax reform plan may also be necessary.

Senator Edwards stated that an independent authority may be needed, with State and private rail carriers working together in a public/private partnership, in order to maximize rails which could minimize the need for taxpayer's money since most of the expenses could be paid by a surcharge on shippers that would pay for bonds to be issued to upgrade the rail system and could remove approximately 30 per cent of trucks from Interstate 581. He pointed out that the national average for trains is 405 miles per gallon of fuel per ton, which is the most efficient form of land transportation in the State, and to rely more heavily on trains would help to address energy, environment, and congestion issues.

Delegate Fralin expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with the City's representatives to the General Assembly during his first two years in the State legislature, and stressed the importance of working together to accomplish common goals.

With regard to domestic violence, Delegate Fralin advised that he plans to introduce a bill requiring that victims be notified when a suspect or an accused suspect makes bail. In addition, he stated that he introduced a bill last year, and will continue to introduce legislation with regard to those parents who place their children in foster care in order to qualify for Medicaid benefits, particularly for mental health care issues. He called upon the City for assistance inasmuch as one version of the bill may have a fiscal impact on the City's share for community service agencies, and concerns will need to be addressed with regard to cost. He expressed appreciation for the City's support of the Heartland Corridor initiative and commended the Economic Development staff for assistance with regard to a request by the Department of Rail in connection with Norfolk Southern Corporation backup data. He stated that if funds are approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board on December 15, 2005, the Heartland Corridor can be started for east/west intermodal rail transportation.

There being no further business, the Mayor expressed appreciation to Senator Edwards and to Delegates Fralin and Ware for meeting with the Council and the School Board to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern to the City of Roanoke and the City's school system.

At 1:55 p.m., the Mayor declared the Council meeting in recess until 2:00 p.m., to be reconvened in the City Council Chamber, Room 450, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., and Chair Stockburger declared the meeting of the Roanoke City School Board adjourned.

At 2:00 p.m., on Monday, December 5, 2005, the Council meeting reconvened in the City Council Chamber, Room 450, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, Virginia, with Mayor C. Nelson Harris presiding.

PRESENT: Council Members Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., Sherman P. Lea, Brenda L. McDaniel, Brian J. Wishneff, M. Rupert Cutler, Alfred T. Dowe, Jr., and Mayor C. Nelson Harris-----7.

ABSENT: None -----0.

The Mayor declared the existence of a quorum.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager; William M. Hackworth, City Attorney; Jesse A. Hall, Director of Finance; and Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

The invocation was delivered by Council Member Alfred T. Dowe, Jr.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Harris.

PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: NONE.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor advised that all matters listed under the Consent Agenda were considered to be routine by the Members of Council and would be enacted by one motion in the form, or forms, listed on the Consent Agenda, and if discussion was desired, the item would be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

OATHS OF OFFICE-COMMITTEES-ROANOKE ARTS COMMISSION-TOWING ADVISORY BOARD: A report of qualification of the following persons, was before Council.

Edward W. Barnett as a member of the Roanoke Arts Commission, to fill the unexpired term of Mark C. McConnel, resigned, ending June 30, 2007; and

Phyllis A. Johnson as member of the Towing Advisory Board, for a term ending June 30, 2008.

Council Member Cutler moved that the report of qualification be received and filed. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Fitzpatrick adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Fitzpatrick, Lea, McDaniel, Wishneff, Cutler, Dowe, and Mayor Harris-----7.

NAYS: None -----0.

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

LIBRARIES: Stanley G. Breakell, President, Roanoke Public Library Board, presented the following resolution which was adopted by the Library Board on November 17, 2005:

"A RESOLUTION URGING THE ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL TO BEGIN THE IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ROANOKE LIBRARY COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

WHEREAS, City Council commissioned a comprehensive study of the City of Roanoke Public Library System, and the Roanoke Library Comprehensive Study (Study) was received by City Council at its meeting of October 3, 2005;

WHEREAS, although Roanoke is a vibrant community, which has been voted as one of America's most "livable" cities, the library system in the City and the Roanoke Valley is a quality of life element in which the City and Valley are clearly deficient;

WHEREAS, the current annual appropriations for City library staffing, facilities, collections, technology and programs are inadequate;

WHEREAS, the City allocates only \$2.99 per capita for library collections while Roanoke County allocates \$4.61 per capita and upper quartile peer libraries nationally allocate \$9.79 per capita;

WHEREAS, with the exception of the Law Library, all City Library facilities were built prior to the mid-1970's;

WHEREAS, the City Library staffing level is .42 staff per 1,000 population while the national staffing level for public library systems serving similar base populations (100,000 to 250,000) is .74 staff per 1,000 population;

WHEREAS, a healthy local economy is more and more dependent upon information technology and the growth of knowledge industries, and public libraries are an economic development tool, as well as an important ingredient of a community's quality of life;

WHEREAS, if Council's vision of "a community of stable, safe, healthy, caring and friendly neighborhoods" is to be achieved, then neighborhood libraries must be provided that are learning and recreational havens for Roanoke citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Roanoke Public Library Advisory Board urges a meaningful and timely response to the Roanoke Library Comprehensive Study;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Roanoke Public Library Advisory Board as follows:

1. The Library Advisory Board concurs with the regrettable finding of the Study City Libraries are under utilized because staffing, facilities, collections, technology and programs are inadequate.

2. The Study recommends that the City begin a phased program of funding the capital needs of the City Library System which are estimated to total \$41.2 million (\$37.9 million in facilities and \$3.3 million in technology), and the Library Advisory Board urges that City Council immediately begin the process of designating funding for Phase I of the needed system capital improvements recommended by the Study (\$6.6 million in facilities and \$1.0 million in technology).

3. The Study finds that an additional appropriation of \$1.9 million per year will be required to meet the operating cost needs of the City Library System, and the Library Advisory Board urges City Council to immediately adopt a phased program that will meet the operating costs needs of the City Library System as recommended by the Study.

4. Although the Library Advisory Board believes that merger of the City Library System and the County Library System would result in a more efficient and effective unified system, the Board recognizes that this goal may not be immediately achievable, and the Board urges close cooperation between the two systems, particularly with respect to the location of library facilities.

5. The Library Advisory Board wishes to express its appreciation m City Council for its continuing interest in the City Library System and for Council's careful consideration of the critical needs of the City Library System as documented by the Comprehensive Study."